

ABSTRACT

Systems and methods of distributing and controlling use of data content are provided. Data content is distributed to users by a service provider system, shared between computer system users, or both. In one embodiment, data content is segregated into a plurality of sections, each section is encrypted using a respective one of a plurality of encryption keys, and the resultant plurality of encrypted sections is downloaded to a customer processing platform. In order to control the use of the data content, a plurality of decryption keys corresponding to the plurality of encryption keys are then delivered to the customer processing platform in a manner such that the customer processing platform has possession of at most a subset of the plurality of decryption keys at any time. According to another embodiment, downloaded data content is adapted for use only with a particular software component that establishes a connection with a data content service provider system to obtain permission to use the data content.